



## 2018-2019 Virginia Section 319(h) TMDL Implementation Program Request for Applications (RFA)

<b>Agency</b>	Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Watershed Programs		
<b>Project Types</b>	Implementation of EPA-approved Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Plan (IP) and related Best Management Practice (BMP) installation, information and outreach, and water quality monitoring.		
<b>Eligible Entities</b>	Local governments (including counties, cities, and towns), county health departments, soil and water conservation districts, Virginia institutes of higher education (universities, colleges, etc.), planning district commissions, regional commissions, non-profit environmental organizations and agencies/departments of the Commonwealth of Virginia.		
<b>Deadline</b>	<del>February 9, 2018</del> <b>March 9, 2018</b> at 11:59 p.m.		
<b>Funds Available</b>	DEQ anticipates \$1 million - \$1.5 million will be available for projects starting October 1, 2018 and \$1 million - \$1.5 million available for projects starting October 1, 2019. (Funding levels are subject to change without notice)		
<b>Funding</b>	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Clean Water Act Section 319(h)		
<b>Match Rate</b>	30% Match (Example: \$400,000 319(h) grant funds + \$120,000 match = \$520,000 Total Project Budget)		
<b>Average Range</b>	\$100,000 - \$400,000		
<b>Length</b>	Up to 36 months (No extensions will be allowed)		
<b>Timeline</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RFA Issued..... November 17, 2017</li> <li>Webinar ..... December 12, 2017 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part 1: 2018/2019 RFA Q&amp;A Webinar ..... 8:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.</li> <li>Part 2: Proposal Development Training ..... 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Register at:</b> <a href="https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3025152698953308419">https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3025152698953308419</a></li> <li>Deadline for Submission of Proposals ..... <del>February 9, 2018</del> <b>March 9, 2018</b></li> <li>Proposal Review by VADEQ ..... February 12-March 31, 2018</li> <li>Notification of Selection Status to Applicants ..... April 2018</li> <li>Public Posting of Notice of Intent to Award ..... May 2018</li> <li>Anticipated Project Start Date ..... October 1, 2018 or later</li> <li>Target Project End Date ..... September 30, 2021</li> </ul>		
<b>Contact Email</b>	<a href="mailto:npsgrants@deq.virginia.gov">npsgrants@deq.virginia.gov</a>		
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\* This indicates if any updates/revisions were made to language subsequent to issuing the RFA,

**A. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is making available approximately \$2-3 million in Federal Clean Water Act [Section 319\(h\)](#) grant funding to support [projects](#) that will result in advancement of goals and milestones included in eligible TMDL implementation plans (IPs) and watershed-based plans (IPs).

**B. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

The following entities are eligible to submit an application:

- local governments (including counties, cities, and towns),
- county health departments,
- soil and water conservation districts,
- planning district commissions,
- regional commissions,
- non-profit environmental organizations
- Virginia institutes of higher education, and Virginia state agencies.

Applicants and all sub-recipients must be able to be eligible to receive federal funds to participate in this program. All applicants must certify that they agree to certain funding conditions. All applicants must have a proven record of implementing similar environmental work.

**C. ELIGIBLE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AREAS AND FUNDING TARGETS**

In order to be eligible for funding under this RFA, proposed work must address an implementation plan (IP) that 1) has **been submitted to EPA for approval approved by EPA on or before 1/31/2018, and approval by EPA is granted before RFA selection process has completed (estimated March 2018)**, 2) is not part of an active 319(h) grant agreement that ends after June 30, 2019 and 3) has not been closed out after receiving prior federal 319(h) funding through one or many individual grant agreements. DEQ will not review submissions for proposed projects in watersheds that do not have an eligible IP. See [Table 1](#) for a list of eligible IP areas based upon project category. For informational purposes, IPs and project areas that are not eligible are listed in [Table 2](#). If you have IP eligibility questions, please contact [npsgrants@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:npsgrants@deq.virginia.gov), email subject line "<<2018 RFA – IP Eligibility >>".

**Funding will be targeted to projects that:**

- Directly address goals and milestones of an eligible EPA approved IP (See [Table 1](#)).
- Demonstrate a high likelihood of positively impacting water quality.
- Focus on implementation of cost effective BMPs, education and outreach activities listed in a IP.
- Include an engaged and meaningful partnership, especially any that are referenced in the IP.
- Develop an education and outreach strategy and associated products that address pollutant source sectors outlined in a specific Implementation Plan to promote a high rate of participation.
- Address both local water quality concerns identified in a qualified IP and identified regional or statewide priorities (e.g. Chesapeake Bay TMDL Watershed Implementation Plan II or Clinch River Initiative).

**D. CATEGORIES OF FUNDING**

Through this RFA, DEQ will award funding for NPS implementation projects to assist in meeting goals and milestones established in eligible IPs. Applications should only include implementation activities that address source sectors identified for the proposed IP watershed(s) which are listed in [Table 1](#). Applications are being accepted in two different categories of award.

- ***Category 1 – New Implementation Projects:*** IP watersheds that have not received previous TMDL Implementation 319(h) funding either through DEQ or the Department of Conservation and Recreation, (DCR), not including 319(h) funded roundtable activity (as indicated in [Table 1](#)). Proposals will be required to provide an assessment of the need as reviewed from the Implementation Plan and analysis of how their proposed work will help meet goals and milestones listed in the IP in question.

- **Category 2 – Current Implementation Projects:** Projects that have a qualifying, active 319(h) funded TMDL Implementation Project from DEQ (as indicated in [Table 1](#)) and have an interest in additional funding to continue the project for an additional time period. This category is restricted to Grantees with a current 319(h) funded 6/30/2019. Grantees must have made satisfactory progress in meeting the deliverable schedule of their current grant and provide justification of why the project should be continued for requested time period.

## E. ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Applications should only include implementation activities that address source sectors identified for the proposed IP watershed(s). Proposals that include implementation activities outside of these watersheds will not be eligible for consideration. Unless otherwise approved by DEQ, proposed best management practices (BMPs) should meet the specifications and design guidance provided by the [DEQ's Nonpoint Source Implementation Cost-share BMP Guidelines](#) and (if appropriate) one of the following resources:

- DCR's [Virginia Agricultural BMP Cost-Share Manual](#)
- DEQ [Virginia Stormwater Management Publications](#)
- DEQ and Virginia Tech [Stormwater BMP Clearinghouse Post-Construction BMPs](#)
- Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation District (VASWCD)'s [Virginia Conservation Assistance Program \(VCAP\) Resources](#), specifically the [VCAP BMP Manual](#)
- [The Virginia Stream Restoration and Stabilization Best Management Practices Guide](#)

All projects will be required to assure that BMPs meet DEQ requirements for operation and maintenance plans and landowner agreements. Activities must be outlined in approved IPs or be comparable to such activities listed in the IP.

**Targeted Area:** It is suggested that applicants review the geographic area described in the subject IP and review any targeting strategies. Proposals that present a reasonable plan to address prioritizing the implementation within very large geographic areas will have an advantage over proposals that do not address strategic targeting or prioritizing of the requested work.

1. **Best Management Practices (BMPs):** The major initiative of a proposal should be to install or complete BMPs identified in the approved implementation plan. Applicants should review the associated IP and the different BMPs required for each milestone and stage and then devise a strategy that will implement a portion of those BMPs to meet a specified percent of the goals listed in the IP.
  - a. **Agricultural BMPs:** The RFA will not provide funding for agricultural BMP programs that are not administered or conducted by a SWCD. Agricultural programs must 1) adhere to the [DEQ's Nonpoint Source Implementation Cost-share BMP Guidelines](#), 2) adhere to DCR's [Virginia Agricultural BMP Cost-Share Manual](#) for certain BMPs, 3) use of the [Virginia Nonpoint Source Cost-share BMP Contract](#) referenced in the DEQ guidelines, and 4) recording the BMPs in DCR's Agricultural Tracking Program, are required.
  - b. **Residential Septic BMPs:** This RFA will only fund residential septic BMPs that are listed in [DEQ's Nonpoint Source Implementation Cost-share BMP Guidelines](#) and that adhere to the associated BMP specifications and residential septic program guidelines. All projects requesting funds for residential septic programs must be willing to submit an annual Residential Program Guidelines to DEQ for approval based upon any updates DEQ makes to the BMP Guidelines annually.
  - c. **Pet Waste BMPs:** If listed in the IP, applications may include a proposal for the development and implementation of a pet waste education program as well as the implementation of various pet waste BMPs. Adherence to the pet waste specifications listed in [DEQ's Nonpoint Source Implementation Cost-share BMP Guidelines](#) is required

- d. **Urban/Suburban BMPs:** This RFA can fund urban BMPs listed in an IP that do not appear the “non-eligible” list within this RFA and are addressing stormwater and other actions not required by a NPDES/VPDES permit or to meet permit conditions. BMPs must follow the specifications listed in the DEQ Stormwater Handbook (which can be found here [Virginia Stormwater Management Publications](#)), the DEQ and Virginia Tech [Stormwater BMP Clearinghouse](#), the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation District (VASWCD)’s [Virginia Conservation Assistance Program \(VCAP\) Resources](#), specifically the [VCAP BMP Manual](#), or [The Virginia Stream Restoration and Stabilization Best Management Practices Guide](#). All BMPs will be required to have an Operation and Maintenance Plan developed and approved by DEQ along with signed landowner agreements.
  - e. **Resource Extraction (Mining) BMPs:** This RFA can fund resource extraction (mining) BMPs listed in an IP that do not appear the “non-eligible” list within this RFA and are addressing non-regulated activities and other actions not required by a NPDES/VPDES permit or to meet permit conditions or active mining conditions. Generally, this relates to addressing acid mine drainage (AMD) and orphaned mine land or abandoned mine land (OML or AML). If specifications for actions are not listed in the manuals and guidelines listed earlier in this section, then approval must be provided by the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) that the proposed work is based on industry standards. All BMPs will be required to have an Operation and Maintenance Plan developed and approved by DEQ along with signed landowner agreements.
2. **Education and Outreach:** Applications should include a thorough description of any intended outreach, recruitment and education activities that will allow them to accomplish the BMP goals that they have included. Examples of outreach and educational activities may include:
- i. Identifying potential land or property owners for BMP installation.
  - ii. Develop and/or enhance education and outreach strategy and products that will increase participation.
  - iii. Develop training and administrative capacity and procedures.
  - iv. Develop land owner list(s), parcel maps and auxiliary data sets for outreach and targeting.
  - v. Produce tools and resources (Brochures, pamphlets, targeted mailings, presentations, etc.)
3. **Water Quality Monitoring:** Applications may include a request for funding to conduct water quality monitoring to document progress in improving water quality based on implementation. Water quality monitoring funds may include any staff time spent on monitoring activities (sample collection and analyses) as well as supplies, equipment, contractual services and travel related to actual sampling and reporting. These funds can be used to document progress in achieving water quality milestones listed in the TMDL IP, and for identifying areas in the watershed(s) where the pollutant of concern concentrations or loadings are the highest. The latter could assist in outreach and targeting of BMP implementation. Parameters to be addressed should be in line with the monitoring plan included in the TMDL IP. *Water quality monitoring for research and BMP efficiency is not eligible for CWA Section 319(h) grant funding.*
- a. Applications that include a request for monitoring funds must provide a completed Tab 5 - NPS Water Quality Monitoring Plan within the 319(h) Application Form.
  - b. Applications that include funding for monitoring or data collection/generation must include in a statement in the proposal that they will
    - i. Develop and submit, for DEQ approval, a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) following protocols established DEQ. Time to develop a QAPP should be included in the monitoring budget and counts towards the budget cap.
    - ii. Include references in their proposal on how they will process, analyze, store and report resulting data and information; including submitting data to EPA’s STORET database and to DEQ at the completion of the project.
  - c. Water quality monitoring may not exceed 5% of grant funds requested.

## F. INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Activities that are not eligible and that will not be supported with 319(h) funding include:

- Projects located outside of an eligible TMDL IP watershed (see [Table 1](#)).
- Implementation of BMPs not included in a listed TMDL IP (see [Table 1](#)) unless justification can be provided for inclusion of an equivalent BMP.
- Unless otherwise approved by DEQ, BMPs *not* meeting established specifications.
- Activities completed to satisfy an enforcement action or for NPDES/VPDES permit development, implementation or compliance (this includes BMPs and activities credited under a MS4 permit or an MS4 TMDL Action Plan).
- Activities that are required by law (excluding correction of failing septic systems and straight pipes).
- Septic tank pump-outs exclusively used to meet Chesapeake Bay Act requirements.
- Public sanitary sewer system improvements, including sewer line extensions.
- Purchase of promotional items, unless that promotional item is specifically listed in the TMDL Implementation Plan and is specifically detailed in the proposal, and DEQ receives prior authorization from EPA.
- Funding for education and outreach activities that are not directly related to achieving goals and milestones of the TMDL IP, including staff time spent on these activities and direct financial support for events.
- Food or beverages for events that do not meet the classification of a qualifying event and which do not adhere to DEQ or EPA guidelines.

#### G. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS

Approximately \$1-1.5 million is anticipated to be available for projects starting in 2018 and \$ 1-1.5 million is anticipated to be available for projects to start in 2019.

- **Standard Grant Agreement:** DEQ uses a standard grant agreement for all projects awarded funding through this RFA. Applicants selected to receive funding must be willing to adhere to any applicable federal administrative, financial, programmatic, and reporting requirements, including, at a minimum, quarterly progress and financial reporting.
- **The Section 319(h) Grant Program is a reimbursement program.** *Applicants must be willing to receive funding on a cost-reimbursement basis; advances will not be available.* Grant recipients must perform the work, pay for project costs, and submit an invoice with supporting documentation before DEQ will reimburse recipients for any approved costs. DEQ will only make reimbursements to the grant recipient and will reimburse the grant recipient a minimum of quarterly, but no more frequently than monthly. Generally, reimbursements are submitted by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month following the end of a calendar quarter (e.g., April 15, July 15, October 15, January 15). DEQ follows the Virginia Prompt Pay Act, which requires DEQ to make payments within 30 days of receipt of a qualifying and approved report, reimbursement request and invoice.
- **Cost-share Rates for BMPs:** Applicants must be willing to adhere to cost-share funding limitations as prescribed in [DEQ's Nonpoint Source Implementation Cost-share BMP Guidelines](#) as for associated agricultural, residential septic and pet waste BMPs. 319(h) funds are not available for BMPs that exceed these funding caps.
- **Award Range:** The award range for 319(h) NPS funding available through this RFA is \$100,000 (minimum) and \$400,000 (maximum).
- **Match:** There is a requirement for providing 30% match towards the project. This can be a combination of federal or non-federal match, although applications that provide non-federal match may receive a more favorable score.
  - a. Required percentages are based upon the total Section (319(h) funds requested; total project cost is the 319(h) grant funds plus match. Example: An entity requests \$200,000 and is required to provide a 30% match; total match would be \$60,000 for a total project budget of \$260,000.
  - b. Documentation of match commitment via a letter of support will be required upon project approval.



Per federal requirements, during the life of approved projects, all match expenditures must be documented in a similar manner to grant fund expenditures. Funds that are previously matched/committed to another grant may not be used as match.

- c. **Exemptions for Fiscal Stress:** Proposals requesting septic funding may request an exemption to provide a lower match amount for septic activities. Grantees whose project areas are located within a locality rated as High or Above Average Fiscal Stress may request to use the “Fiscal Stress Residential BMP Cost-Share Rate” structure (listed on pages 22-24 of [DEQ’s Nonpoint Source Implementation Cost-share BMP Guidelines](#)). Those that use the [fiscal stress](#) rate structure may request to receive an exemption for the Match requirement which would reduce their match requirement to 15%.
  - i. **Example:** In the example above, a \$200,000 grant is 100% being used for septic work. The project is in a high fiscal stress area. The application would need to provide \$30,000 of match; the total project cost would be \$230,000.
  - ii. **Example:** If only 50% of the \$200,000 grant request is being used for septic work, then match would be applied as such ( $\$100,000 \times 30\% + \$100,000 \times 15\% = \$45,000$  in match); the total project cost would be \$245,000.
- **Non-BMP (Technical Assistance) Funding:** Non-BMP or Technical Assistance (TA) funding is defined as any funds that are not directly related to the installation of best management practices on the ground. TA funds would include costs related to staff expenses (salary, fringe, travel), education and outreach, indirect and administrative costs. TA funds are capped at a percent of the grant funds requested based upon category. Any costs related to BMP installation would be considered BMP funding (not including staff time to design the system or recruit participants). The maximum rate of TA to total grant funding is 20% ( $\$400,000 \times 20\% = \$80,000$  TA;  $\$320,000 + \$80,000$  TA = \$400,000 Total Grant funding).
  - a. **Exceptions:** There are three situations where exceptions can be made to provide additional TA funds in order to address unique situations that ultimately will help improve the management and execution of projects. These situations are:
    - i. **Administering for Multiple Partners:** For those applications that are requesting 319(h) funds for multiple partners or sub-grantees (2 or more partner receiving funds aside from the applicant), the applicant or the main partner who will be administering the grant and all sub grants will be allowed to apply for additional TA funding. A maximum of an additional 10% of the BMP funds may be requested for administrative activities. Administrative support includes salaries, overhead (rent, electricity, telephone, etc.), or indirect costs for services provided to administer the project. Proposals that include multiple partners who will perform different components of the work and will receive TA funding for their work may be eligible to apply for up to 10% additional TA funds to compensate for coordinating all of the partners and associated reporting. This exception is only eligible for projects that have more than one additional partner that will be sub-grantees for which the applicant will have to administer a sub-grant. Paying a contractor does not qualify for additional TA, but engaging a partner and providing them a sub-grant award would qualify.
    - ii. **Exception for Water Quality Monitoring:** Proposals that include a monitoring plan to collect water quality monitoring information to document progress in improving water quality based on implementation efforts are eligible for additional TA funds to cover costs related to the monitoring (including staff, contract costs, supplies, etc.). There is a cap of 5% of grant funding (for example, if total grant funding is \$400,000 including the monitoring funds, then the total monitoring funds that are available is \$20,000).
    - iii. **Exception for a New Grantees:** Proposals that are submitted for an organization that has never received or administered a Targeted TMDL Implementation project, or received Section 319(h) funds from Virginia, will be able to apply for a one-time 5% increase in TA funds (e.g., up to \$20,000 on a \$400,000 grant proposal) to provide additional resources

needed for starting up an implementation project. The additional TA funds can be used for developing system processes to address reporting and tracking needs, initial education and outreach purposes and for the development of initial materials and systems. Proposals must include an explanation of what will be accomplished utilizing the additional funds.

*If all exceptions apply, the maximum amount of TA funds available would be 40% or \$160,000 (\$400,000 = \$80,000 TA, \$40,000 Partners, \$20,000 WQM, \$20,000 new, \$240,000 BMP).*

- b. **Indirect Costs:** Applicants with a federally approved indirect cost rate agreement may include indirect costs within their application as part of their non-BMP funding request. This can be either grant funded or for match. If indirect funds are requested or provided as match, the applicant must include documentation of a federally approved indirect rate with their application (including a signed copy of the agreement). Indirect funds are considered part of the TA funds. If the applicant does not have a federally approved indirect cost rate agreement, the applicant may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% (see [Section 200.414\(f\)](#) of the Federal Uniform Grant Guidance).
- **Time Frame:** All proposals must specify a defined project period that outlines the expenditure of funds that does not exceed what is allowable by this RFA. Please note that it is not anticipated that contracts will be issued to start before October 1, 2018. At the discretion of DEQ, successful applicants may be asked to delay the start date of their projects until October 1, 2019 to address funding availability.
  - **Federal Terms and Conditions:** Recipients of federal 319(h) grant funds must administer their funds according to prevailing federal terms and conditions. DEQ may request reporting information that documents adherence with these requirements. For more information, please refer to the Federal Uniform Grant Guidance. In addition, an example of the current federal terms and conditions that will be included as an amendment to any grant award can be provided upon request.
  - **Subcontracting and Sub-grantees:** Grantees may subcontract/sub-grant portions of their Section 319(h) grant or local matching funds for technical or other services associated with implementation of the proposed project. Any anticipated sub grantees or subcontractors should be listed in the proposed budget under “contractual.” Any costs associated with a subcontract/sub-grant must be approved in writing by DEQ (and EPA) if not included in the executed grant contract prior to the start of the work.
  - **Costs related to BMP Design:** Proposals requesting funds for design costs only will not be funded. Projects that are reimbursed for design costs that cancel or close before the design is implemented are subject to the enforcement clause of the standard agreement that requires repayment. Proposals that include funding requests for agricultural BMPs must be able to provide documentation that program staff have the appropriate DCR and/or NRCS recognized certification for the engineering design for the BMP.
  - **Justification for Food and Refreshments:** Grant funds shall not be used for food or refreshments at activities or events (e.g., meetings, workshops, training, field days or conferences) unless the objectives of the event would be compromised if food or refreshments were not provided. The requested grant funds will be allowed only if meetings adhere to the qualifying conditions listed in the terms and conditions. The Grantee must obtain pre-authorization in writing from DEQ prior to the expenditure of grant funds that a meeting or event meets the qualifying conditions. Costs for food and refreshments shall be at or below the Commonwealth of Virginia or local per diem rates (as applicable) for the event location. Proposals that include funding for food or refreshments for a qualifying event must provide the following information for each event:
    1. An estimated budget and description for the light refreshments, meals, and/or beverages to be served at the event(s);
    2. A description of the purpose, agenda, location, length and timing for the event; and
    3. An estimated number of participants in the event and a description of their roles.
    4. Justification: Federal EPA policy prohibits the use of EPA funds for receptions, banquets and similar activities that take place after normal business hours unless the recipient has provided a justification that has been expressly approved by DEQ.

## H. PARTNERSHIPS AND TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

**Partnerships:** Past experience has shown that an active and engaged community partnership involving all stakeholders in a watershed is a key component in a successful NPS implementation project. This RFA is intended to recognize partnerships that will result in comprehensive implementation of an implementation plan. Applicants should demonstrate that an appropriate watershed partnership exists to implement the project, or provide a clear commitment and strategy to form such a partnership in support of the project. If a list of partners is identified in the IP, the applicant must demonstrate an effort to include key partners in the project. In cases where partners are not explicitly stated in an IP, applicants should consider a comprehensive review and assessment of all potential partners to make sure all relevant issues/partners are addressed. In cases where an appropriate local partnership does not already exist, projects should include a strategy to identify and engage essential partners. Applicants are strongly encouraged to actively seek partnerships within their proposed project area during development of the pre-proposal; however, at a minimum the following partnerships, where applicable, must be included:

- **Residential Septic:** All proposals must demonstrate a clearly defined partnership with local/county health department(s) in the project area if residential septic system activities are included in the project scope.
- **Agriculture:** The local soil and water conservation district(s) must be included as a key partner (technical service provider) in any proposal including agricultural BMP implementation. Funding for agricultural BMPs cost share may only be administered by SWCDs.
- **Urban Stormwater:** If urban stormwater management activities are included in an application, the proposal must demonstrate an effective partnership with local government staff and appropriate stormwater professionals.

**Technical Expertise, Engineering Design, Design Costs and ‘Job Approval Authority’:** Proposals should demonstrate that the project will utilize appropriate technical expertise for project implementation and BMP design/construction to ensure that projects are technically sound and meet approved BMP specifications. Applicants and/or their partners must demonstrate an ability to effectively track and report on all BMP implementation activities.

- The Grantee, or its approved designee, is responsible for the development of designs and applications for all applicable local, state and federal permits for all BMPs to be installed/implemented. The design, depending on the type of BMP, must be certified by a registered or licensed Professional Engineer of Virginia, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff, or licensed professional that is listed in the associated specification (e.g., licensed Onsite Soil Evaluator for septic systems), unless the applicant obtains a waiver of this certification requirement from DEQ.
- Operation and Maintenance of BMPs: The Grantee, or its approved designee, is responsible for the development and implementation of an operation and maintenance plan (O & M Plan) or its equivalent and obtaining signed landowner agreements for all the BMPs installed during the project period. This includes BMPs installed with match funds or Section 319(h) funds. O & M Plans must be approved by DEQ and should include planning for a minimum of ten (10) years starting from the completion of the implementation of the BMP, unless otherwise agreed to by DEQ or if stated otherwise in the associated BMP specification. A signed DEQ BMP contract can substitute for an O&M Plan and associated landowner agreement for agricultural and residential septic BMPs only.

## I. APPLICATION PACKAGE REQUIREMENTS AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

As specified below, the application package includes several required components, as well as optional components. All required elements must be submitted in order for the proposal to be considered for review. All elements must be in the electronic format specified (e.g., PDF, Microsoft Word or Excel). Please do not provide any additional information not indicated above. DEQ staff will work with successful applicants to ensure that final scopes of work address issues that arise during the proposal review process. Incomplete pre-applications



and those that are not delivered or mailed as specified above will be disqualified. Application packages must be emailed to: [npsgrants@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:npsgrants@deq.virginia.gov). Please use the email subject line: **2018-2019 NPS TMDL RFA\_<insert name of TMDL IP>**. Below is a checklist to assist applicants in preparing their application package.

REQUIRED APPLICATION DOCUMENTS	
<a href="#">319H Application Form</a> (Excel) – Must be submitted in Excel Form	
Tab – 1: Application	
Tab – 2: Project Partners and Technical Leads	
Tab – 3: BMP Activity	
Tab – 4: Project Budget	
Tab – 5: Milestones	
Tab – 6: Water Quality Monitoring Plan	
Tab – 7: Certification Statement (please print out, sign and scan)	
<a href="#">319H Narrative Proposal Form</a> (Word)	
Match Documentation: (1 PDF containing all letters of support which document required matching funds)	
Vicinity Map (limited to one 8 ½ x 11 inch page) and/or Project Site Map (limited to one 8 ½ x 11 inch page)	
<a href="#">W-9</a> “Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification” Commonwealth of Virginia Substitute Form	
OPTIONAL APPLICATION DOCUMENTS	
Letters of Support for non-match partners (limited to 1 combined PDF document)	
Description of previous accomplishments (limited to 1 page, PDF or Word)	

#### J. DEQ CONTACTS

General questions regarding this request for applications, Section 319(h) and NPS implementation should be directed to NPS Program Coordinator, Nicole Sandberg, (804) 698-4043 or NPS Grant and Data Coordinator, Lars Bolton, (804) 698-4435 or [npsgrants@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:npsgrants@deq.virginia.gov) (email subject line: TMDL RFA Question). Specific questions regarding local activity should be directed to the identified Nonpoint Source Coordinator or regional contact person for each of the DEQ Regional Offices. Coverage areas for each Regional Office can be found [here](#):

- **Piedmont Regional Office:** Katie Ranger, [kaitlin.Ranger@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:kaitlin.Ranger@deq.virginia.gov), (804) 527-5018;
- **Tidewater Regional Office:** Kristie Britt, [Kristie.Britt@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:Kristie.Britt@deq.virginia.gov), (757) 518-2153;
- **Northern Regional Office:** Dave Evans, [David.Evans@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:David.Evans@deq.virginia.gov), (703) 583-3835;
- **Valley Regional Office:** Nesha McRae, [Nesha.Mcrae@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:Nesha.Mcrae@deq.virginia.gov), (540) 574-7850;
- **Blue Ridge Regional Office:** James Moneymaker, [James.Moneymaker@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:James.Moneymaker@deq.virginia.gov), (540) 562-6738;
- **Southwest Regional Office:** Stephanie Kreps, [Stephanie.Kreps@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:Stephanie.Kreps@deq.virginia.gov), (276) 676-4803;

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):** A [319\(h\) FAQ](#) document is available that contains a list of questions and answers related to the 2018/2019 RFA. This document will be kept up-to-date during the RFA period.

**K. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SELECTION PROCESS**

**Evaluation and Ranking:** All applications will be reviewed by a Review Team designated by DEQ and scored based upon the evaluative criteria listed below. A final cumulative score will be calculated for all applications based upon scores from all review team members. DEQ will rank all applications from highest to lowest cumulative score. In addition, DEQ will calculate a similar cumulative ranking by geographic basin for applications located within or outside of the Chesapeake Bay.

**Selection Process:** DEQ will assess application rankings and, based upon the availability of funding (which includes the timing of when funds become available), DEQ will select applications for funding based upon the following rationale:

1. The highest ranking application located within the two geographic target areas: Chesapeake Bay Drainage and non-Chesapeake Bay (“Southern River”).
2. Statewide, sequential ranking (highest to lowest) after applications in item 1 above are selected).

DEQ reserves the right to not award all available funding due to quality concerns. DEQ also anticipates awarding funds based upon two individual time periods; those that can start on 10/1/2018 and those that can start on 10/1/2019. DEQ reserves the right to award funding to applications that can start within the start date parameters without conflicts.

Objective Criteria	Points
<b>1.0 Project Overview:</b> The overview provides an appropriate summary of the project including any pertinent deliverables..	5 points
<b>2.0 Project Need:</b> 2.1 The applicant a justification as to why there is a need for the project or why the project needs time and/or resources that documents the need for the project. 2.2 The applicant has documented that there is landowner/participant interest to sign-up for BMP installation (either through a back-log of practices or a list of interested persons). 2.3 Category 2 only: The project has shown steady progress towards meeting both grant goals and TMDL IP implementation Goals. An assessment of water quality data shows progress in increasing water quality conditions. 2.4 Category 1 only: The proposal provides information describing the need for and importance of conducting the proposed activities in the specified location.	15 points
<b>3.0 Watershed, Geographic Description or Location of Project:</b> 3.1 The proposal provides a list of watersheds and describes project area 3.2 The proposal addresses a targeted geographic area that is a size that will make the project successful and effective. 3.3 The proposal discusses targeting approaches. 3.4 The proposal includes priority ranking of watershed(s) for BMPs implementation 3.5 The proposal addresses both local water quality concerns identified in a TMDL IP and regional or statewide initiatives (e.g., the Chesapeake Bay TMDL Watershed Implementation Plan, Clinch River Initiative.	15 points
<b>4.0 Project Methods, Objectives and Tasks:</b> 4.1 The applicant has demonstrated their understanding of the implementation requirements listed in the subject TMDL Implementation Plan, including required BMPs, milestones, education and outreach, in terms of achievable results. 4.2 The proposal provides a clear description of the overall project, including the methods and technical approach to be used.	30 points

<p>4.3 Task level information is provided for each element of the project, including timelines, milestones, expected outcomes, accomplishments, and other information.</p> <p>4.4 The proposal provides detail regarding outcomes and outputs to gather the proposed accomplishments of the project</p> <p>4.5 For projects that propose monitoring, the proposal should include a detailed description of the monitoring program and associated QA procedures, as well as a commitment to entering data into STORET.</p> <p>4.6 The proposal includes detailed information about BMP implementation for each source sector, including BMP type and extent of implementation.</p> <p>4.7 The proposal describes outreach and educational activities and how these activities will influence and allow for the completion of BMP goals</p>	
<p><b>5.0 Budget Review</b></p> <p>5.1 Between the narrative and the application forms, the proposal package provides comprehensive, accurate, and complete budget information.</p> <p>5.2 The funds requested are realistic for the requested time period and for the deliverables listed, and include reasonable assumptions for the various cost categories.</p> <p>5.3 The proportion of non-BMP funds to BMP funds requested is consistent with RFA requirements</p>	15 points
<p><b>6.0 Partnerships and Technical Leads</b></p> <p>6.1 The application has identified meaningful partners</p> <p>6.2 Partners and Technical Leads are appropriate local and/or technical expertise for project implementation and BMP design/construction.</p> <p>6.3 Partners are listed in the TMDL Implementation Plan (IP), or provides a strategy to identify and engage essential partners in the case where partners were not identified in the IP and/or an appropriate local partnership does not already exist.</p> <p>6.4 Partners listed maximizes leveraging of resources in support of a comprehensive watershed restoration approach that will ultimately address pollutant sources identified in the TMDL Implementation Plan.</p> <p>6.5 The proposal identifies the roles and responsibilities of each partner to implement the achievements and accomplishments listed in the proposal.</p>	15 points
<p><b>7.0 Organizational Capacity and Experience</b></p> <p>7.1 The applicant clearly demonstrates the experience and capacity to manage and administer grant projects, including 319(h). Previous project and grant management experience should be identified.</p> <p>7.2 The application demonstrates the capability of the sponsor and partners to successfully complete the project (e.g., qualifications, expertise, and role within the community).</p> <p>7.3 If the applicant is requesting to administer more than one TMDL Implementation Project, the applicant can demonstrate the organizational capacity and ability to administer more than one project.</p> <p>7.4 The applicant has demonstrated the ability to track agricultural and residential BMP implementation through the VA Agricultural BMP Tracking program or will be assisted by partners who have the ability to do so.</p>	25 points
<p><b>8.0 Cost Effectiveness and Efficiency of Project:</b></p> <p>8.1 The application is cost-effective in achieving measurable results - NPS pollution reductions (PR) and meeting TMDL IP Goals. Rank of project based on the calculated PR (based upon BMPs proposed to be installed) to funds requested and on the ratio of technical assistance cost to BMP cost.</p> <p>8.2 The proposed budget is reasonable and proposes the use of grant and match resources effectively and efficiently.</p> <p>8.3 The proposed budget concentrates limited resources for BMP implementation and outreach in priority subwatersheds identified in the TMDL IP.</p> <p>8.4 The proposal sufficiently leverages resources from other sources.</p> <p>8.5 The match amount is appropriate and the activity covered by the match directly supporting the nature and content of the proposed efforts.</p>	10 points

8.6 The Applicant demonstrate an active partnership and provide appropriate match (cash or in-kind) to accomplish activities and deliverables will be credited for their efforts.	
<b>9.0 Project Timeline, Milestones and Outputs:</b> 9.1 The timeline and milestones and project level detail adequately conveys that the project will be completed successfully. 9.2 The applicant has provided appropriate level of information how these requirements will achieve certain phase or time frame milestones. 9.3 The applicant includes information regarding ongoing ability to effectively track and report all BMP implementation activities. 9.4 The applicant has provided sufficient detail on tasks and key deliverables to provide confidence in their success.	20 Points
<b>Total Maximum Points</b>	150 points

<b>Applicant Experience Criteria</b> – Every applicant will be evaluated on past performance in managing grants. All points will be applied to the final score after evaluative review.	Points
<b>A. Applicant Ranking-Rating (Category 1 projects only, points will be deducted)</b> Applicants will be assessed based upon performance over the last 5 years related to meeting expectations for grant and/or project administration and coordinating grants and projects. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strong Track Record:</b> (0 points)</li> <li>• <b>No Experience with Applicant:</b> (0 points)</li> <li>• <b>Weak Track Record:</b> The applicant has a weak track record coordinating and administering grants and projects. Project deliverables were rarely completed on time and/or often did not meet the expected quality level. Modifications to the project scope were required due to administrative issues on the part of the applicant. (- 10 points).</li> </ul>	-10 points
<b>B. Satisfactory Progress Determination and Review: Category 2 projects only</b> The progress review conducted by DEQ within the last 6 months indicated that the applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Exceeds Satisfactory Progress:</b> The Grantee is exceeding all goals in the executed agreement, is exceeding any expectations for a Satisfactory progress review and the Project as a whole is close to meeting some BMP goals outlined in the TMDL IP. The Project has demonstrated increased participation resulting in a waiting list of participants who are lined-up for BMPs, if funding becomes available. <b>(+ 10 points)</b></li> <li>• <b>Meets Satisfactory Progress:</b> The Grantee is meeting the goals and deliverables outlined in the executed grant agreements. The Grantee has demonstrated the ability to successfully manage and administer a 319(h) implementation project and has received a fully Satisfactory progress review rating, or has completely addressed any issues from a less than fully Satisfactory review. This category can also include Grantees that did not receive a fully Satisfactory review during the last progress review; however, the Grantee has demonstrated improvement toward meeting the deficiencies identified or adequately addressed how these deficiencies will be resolved if the proposal is funded. (0 points)</li> <li>• <b>Not Meeting Satisfactory Progress:</b> The Grantee did not receive a fully Satisfactory review during the last progress review; and the identified deficiencies have not been addressed, nor does the proposal adequately explain how they will be addressed in the future. (- 10 Points)</li> </ul>	+/- 10 points

## Appendix I: Narrative Proposal Guidelines

**Narrative Guidelines:** These guidelines are intended to assist the applicant in filling out both the 319(h) Application Form (Tabs 1-7) and the 319(h) Proposal Narrative Form. The guidelines are designed to describe the needs and expectations for each component of the Narrative Proposal. For questions please contact [npsgrants@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:npsgrants@deq.virginia.gov), subject “RFP-Narrative”

1. **Project Overview:** In this section, provide a brief overview and summary of the project including a description of the need for the project, how the project will work towards meeting TMDL implementation plan or watershed-based plan (IP) goals, and anticipated outcomes of the project. Information in this section should provide a clear connection between the environmental or water quality problem and the proposed project is the appropriate solution. This section must include brief descriptions (or bulleted lists where appropriate) of:

- a. Anticipated outcomes
- b. NPS implementation actions/goals (typically found in the IP)
- c. Outreach activities, and
- d. Anticipated organizational support or capacity building activities.

\*If previous or other associated grants exist, the proposal should include a reference to those grants and state how the proposal will build upon that foundation.

2. **Project Need:** Describe the nature of the TMDL and documented water quality impairment(s) to be addressed by the project. Also note the relative contribution of the primary pollutant sources in the watershed to the impairment.

- a. Provide relevant local knowledge of opportunities to address the water quality problem, such as expressed/documented interest to install best management practices.
- b. Explain the need for and importance of conducting the proposed activities in the specified locations, and how the proposed approach effectively addresses water quality improvement needs.
- c. **For Category 2 projects:** Proposals may focus on different geographic areas (within the IP area) or different management practices in the same area. Describe the need to continue the existing project, and explain what water quality improvements have occurred to date, and what further improvements are expected with the additional resources requested.

3. **Watershed, Geographic Description or Location of Project:** Proposals should include a thorough description of the watershed and spatial extent of the project (specific watershed information will also be included in Tab 1 of the Application), including the following information:

- a. Describe the geographic extent of the proposal; include the proposed implementation watershed(s); including land use distribution and any highly valued natural resources.
- b. If the proposal will focus on smaller, targeted areas within the larger TMDL IP, describe the targeting approached used.
  - i. Include a description of any priority ranking of selected watershed(s), as provided in the implementation plan.
  - ii. If a ranking was not developed in the IP, describe how the watershed(s) were selected for the proposal.
- c. Describe any characteristics of the watershed(s) and the local community that will contribute to the success of the proposed proposal and address any possible challenges that are anticipated. For example, historically high rates of participation in agricultural cost share programs could indicate a high probability of success in implementation efforts.



- d. A proposal may have a multi-tiered geographic coverage. For example, a proposal may have an approach for outreach that covers the entire IP area but will target BMP installation in 1-2 priority sub-watershed areas in order to have a greater impact on water quality.
  - e. For Category 2 projects: if the proposal is requesting a change in the geographic coverage or targeting approach from what is used in the current grant; applicants should provide a description and a justification for the changed approached and geographic coverage.
4. **Project Methods, Objectives and Tasks:** This section will contain the majority of the content of the proposal. Provide details on the various components of the proposal, separated by source sector and/or program area (e.g., agriculture, residential septic, pet waste, urban programs, mining, education and outreach, water quality monitoring, etc.). Task level information and deliverables will also be addressed in question 9 of the narrative and in Tab 5 “Milestones” of the Application Form.

**Methodology and Approach:** Describe overall methodology and approach, including any major activities, tasks or deliverables (number, type, etc.) that will be undertaken.

- a. Task level information is, of course, the most project-specific and detailed language in the proposal and should contain the basic who, what, when, where, how, and how much for each activity. Generally, a single task should not describe multiple activities. Separate tasks should be developed for distinct activities. Provide an estimate of the extent of key tasks or activities (e.g., hold 3 rotational grazing field days), the partners involved and the target audience for each proposed outreach activity
- b. *Describe the project activities and goals*, how they will be accomplished and how they will be reported or tracked.
- c. Provide the phase or timeframe and associated milestones from the TMDL IP that will be addressed by the proposed project (e.g., Phase 1 or years 1-2).
- d. *Include key activities, outcomes, outputs and accomplishments for each component*. Include how the proposed education and outreach activities support recommended outreach activities included in the TMDL implementation plan.
- e. *Describe how the proposed activities will increase the likelihood of implementation of BMPs included in the proposal*. For Category 2 projects, make sure to include achievements to date and how the proposed work will further the achievements of IP goals.

**Outcomes and Outputs:** Provide a bulleted list of environmental, social, economic, behavioral and/or intellectual deliverables that describe the project's anticipated outputs (number, type and kind of accomplishments) and outcomes (impacts, consequences or results). Be as descriptive and quantitative as possible. This section may be used to provide pollution reduction information or identify other environmental results expected to be achieved.

- a. Describe how this work will be linked to local or regional TMDL IPs or other regional water quality initiatives.
- b. Describe how BMP implementation will be verified, tracked and documented.
- c. Describe how the project will verify and document quantifiable results, especially those related to nutrient and sediment reductions.

**Key Areas:**

- a. **BMP Implementation:** Provide a brief description of the BMPs that will be installed, including an estimate of the quantity and extent of each BMP and how the operation and maintenance of the BMPs will be assured. Provide a detailed list of BMPs through completion of the Attachment 3 “BMP” tab of the Application Excel form. In addition, an estimate of the load reductions for each pollutant would be helpful.
  - i. **Agricultural Program:** Include any specific and/or necessary information about developing and conducting an agricultural cost-share program. This could include:

- 1) Providing technical support for BMP design and construction, payments for landowners, tracking of BMPs, etc.
  - 2) Reference applicable agricultural BMP specifications and cost-share caps from appropriate manuals and guidelines as referenced in the RFA.
  - 3) Reference utilization of the BMP contract for participants.
  - 4) Reference use of DCR's Agricultural Tracking Program.
  - 5) Ensure all farm contacts, subsequent practice contracts and planning and implementation are appropriately tracked and certified.
  - 6) Provide comprehensive technical assistance for agricultural landowners to: develop conservation plans, conduct surveys, develop practice designs, layout practices and certify installation of practices to achieve BMP goals.
- ii. **Residential Septic Program:** Proposals should describe the residential septic program that will be developed and implemented under the grant funding. This should include any information on the development of processes, outreach materials, and technical materials, including:
- 1) Information that references the development and implementation of Residential Septic Guidelines that are referenced in DEQ's Nonpoint Source Implementation Cost-share BMP Guidelines.
  - 2) Describe how the project addresses non-point sources (NPS) of bacterial pollution entering the affected waterways via the repair and replacement of malfunctioning and failing septic systems and the replacement of straight pipes with modern septic or alternative systems.
  - 3) Describe how the proposal will identify eligible property owners with malfunctioning or failing septic systems or straight pipes.
  - 4) Reference how the project will develop and utilize local "Residential On-site Program Design and Guidelines" based upon guidelines set forth in DEQ's "NPS BMP Guidelines."
  - 5) Provide a reference Applicants should anticipate that septic system programs should include requiring participants to sign a BMP contract that serves in lieu of a landowner agreement and operation and maintenance plan.
  - 6) Describe how the partners will administer cost share reimbursements and track implementation.
  - 7) Describe how the project will coordinate with, and serve as liaison between, homeowners and local VDH staff to ensure effective planning, permitting, installation, and certification of septic repair and/or installation projects.
- iii. **Urban/Suburban Program:** Proposals should include information which describes in detail the various components of the urban/suburban program, including pet waste activity. The proposal must address BMPs that follow the specifications listed in the DEQ Virginia Stormwater Management Handbook, the DEQ and Virginia Tech Stormwater BMP Clearinghouse, the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation District (VASWCD)'s Virginia Conservation Assistance Program Implementation and Design Manual or The Virginia Stream Restoration and Stabilization Best Management Practices Guide. BMPs included should not appear on the "non-eligible" list within this RFA and should address stormwater and other actions not required by a NPDES/VPDES permit or to meet permit conditions.
- 1) Proposals that include elements of a pet waste program must provide detailed information about the strategies that will be used to assure adoption of the program. Possible sites or organizations that plan to install listed pet waste practices should be included.

- 2) Describe how the project will coordinate with, and serve as liaison between, project partners and technical leads, or how the technical partners/leads will ensure effective planning, permitting, installation, and certification of BMPs.
  - 3) For projects in MS4 areas proposals should describe how the proposed activities do not explicitly address a permit requirement for any VPDES/NPDES permit. Given the universe of BMPs, a regulated entity may select to reference contents of their Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP), a permit or TMDL Action Plan. Successful applicants must be prepared to agree that no 319(h) funded activity may be credited to MS4 or VPDES/NPDES requirements.
  - 4) For projects not within an MS4 area: proposals should include reference that no BMPs installed with 319(h) funds will ever be counted towards MS4 or VPDES/NPDES requirements should the locality become an MS4.
- iv. Resource Extraction:** Abandoned Mine Projects should reference an existing contingency plan or include the development of a plan as a task. Proposals should provide details to describe the resource extraction issue being addressed.
- 1) Proposals should provide assurance that included BMPs do not appear on the “non-eligible” list within this RFA and are addressing non-regulated activities and other actions not required by a NPDES/VPDES permit or to meet permit conditions or active mining conditions.
  - 2) If specifications for actions are not listed in the manuals and guidelines listed in the RFA then approval must be provided by the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) that the proposed work is based on industry standards.
  - 3) Proposals must address how the required Operation and Maintenance Plan and associated landowner agreements will be developed and by whom.
- b. Education and Outreach:** Proposals should clearly explain how the proposed education and outreach activities will contribute to the improvement of water quality and the ability meet the BMP goals by identifying, educating and engaging homeowners, farmers and other participants.
- i. Describe the education and outreach strategies that will be used in the proposed project.
  - ii. For Category 2 Projects: If the proposed request represents a change in current outreach activities, please describe those changes and provide a rationale.
- c. Water Quality Monitoring:** For a proposal that includes water quality monitoring (instream or BMP-related), the task description should include information such as why monitoring is needed and how the data will be used, which subtasks should be used to describe associated activities such as historic data review, monitoring plan development, field reconnaissance, sample collection, and data analysis. All applications including water quality monitoring must submit a Water Quality Monitoring Plan via Tab 6 of the Application Form. For projects that include ambient water quality monitoring, data entry into STORET is required, as stated in the § 319 grant terms and conditions and the National NPS program guidelines.
- i. QAPP: A task for Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) development should be included for all projects where a QAPP is required by EPA’s Quality System for Environmental Data and Technology. In addition to the standard QAPP for collection of new data, commonly required QAPPs for activities funded under §319 include Secondary Data plans for the gathering and/or use of existing data, Geospatial plans for use of GIS and other spatial or mapping activities, and Modeling plans for projects related to modeling activities. Tasks associated with QAPP development should describe what activities will be covered and what type of QAPPs will be developed, (i.e. modeling, secondary data, GIS, etc.). It should be noted that an existing QAPP or a QAPP that addresses multiple projects may be utilized if

field and lab procedures are common to several projects, requiring only project-specific information such as site locations or sampling frequency be submitted for individual projects.

5. **Budget Narrative:** Provide a brief, narrative description of the funding requested as it compares to any other funds that are being used on the project (regardless of source of funds) that compliments and clarifies the detailed budget that will be provided through completion of the “Tab 4-Budget” tab of the Application Form. The narrative should describe any assumptions used in developing the budget. The narrative should also address any special circumstances, requests or exemptions, including:
  - a. **Match Exemption for Fiscal Stress:** Proposals that include the development and implementation of a residential septic program may request a reduced match amount. See Section G of the RFA on more information regarding this exemption. Proposals need to provide a justification of why they are asking to be allowed to submit a match amount lower than 30%. Projects that are geographically located within localities that are fiscally stressed must provide justification as to why they are utilizing a pro-rated reduction of their match.
  - b. **TA versus BMP assessment:** If the proposed budget takes into account any of the TA exceptions stated in the RFA, provide the required justification.
  - c. **Justification of Food and Refreshments:** Provide a justification as to why grant funds are sought for food and refreshments. See the RFA for criteria regarding the restriction on food and refreshments. Provide the required information for each qualifying event, including the amount and reason food and refreshments would be needed.
6. **Partnerships and Technical Leads:** Assure that the proposal adequately addresses any partnership and technical lead information as required in Section H of the RFA. Detailed information about each partner organization should be provided on Tab 2 – Partners in the Application Form.
  - a. If a partner is identified in the IP, demonstrate an effort to include them in the project. In cases where partners are not explicitly stated in an IP, provide a strategy to review and assess all potential partners to make sure all relevant issues/partners are addressed. In cases where an appropriate local partnership does not already exist, provide a strategy to identify and engage essential local partners.
  - b. In order to manage all partnerships’ contributions to the project, provide an explanation for the following:
    - i. How will additional technical and financial resources be leveraged through collaboration between project partners?
    - ii. How will watershed partnerships coordinate on implementation? If a coordinating entity has been designated, describe how they will lead the partnership for specific activities (e.g., lead for residential septic program or water quality monitoring). This could include the addition of regular project meetings and other strategies to encourage continued collaboration and communication within the watershed partnership.
7. **Organizational Capacity:** Describe how this organization has the capacity to lead and administer a 319(h)-funded NPS implementation project and has the processes in place to be successful. Include the following information, as appropriate:
  - a. Past projects funded by federal funds, including but not limited to 319(h) funds.
    - i. Project title
    - ii. Funding source
    - iii. Dates/duration of project
    - iv. Grant award amount

- v. Descriptive information of the project(s) including successes, hardships, etc.
  - b. Within your organization, list staff members that will be responsible for the following activities:
    - i. Grant reporting
    - ii. Tracking of BMPs
    - iii. Primary contact for the project
    - iv. Processing of applications for BMPs
    - v. Education/outreach
  - c. Summarize your organization's past experience with any grant funded projects (within the past two years).
  - d. Describe your organization's experience with projects associated with the BMPs listed in your proposal (agriculture, residential septic, pet waste, urban, etc.).
- 8. **Cost-Effectiveness of Project:** Provide a brief statement that describes the cost-effectiveness of this proposal and how the project will achieve high environmental results with the requested resources.
  - a. Explain why the included activities are more cost-effective than alternative actions.
  - b. Explain why the ratio of calculated pollution reductions (based upon BMPs proposed to be installed) to funds requested demonstrates the proposed project's cost-effectiveness.
- 9. **Timeline and Milestone Table:** Provide a brief description of the sequence and duration of proposed activities and include an overall project timeline. Detailed information about the specific deliverables and timeline should be provided in "Tab 5-Milestone" in Application Form.
  - a. Provide a detailed timeline and list milestones through completion of the Tab 4 "milestone". This form should include a list of key proposed activities and anticipated completion dates that will allow the applicant to complete the proposed work within the specified time frame.